

FINDING MY PASSION:
A COMPILATION OF AN INTERNSHIP
FOR THE ARC OF SEDGWICK COUNTY

Courtney Frantz

Kansas State University

Recipient of the Marjorie J. and Richard L.D. Morse
Family and Community Public Policy Scholarship
Consumer Movement Archives
Richard L.D. and Marjorie J. Morse
Department of Special Collections
Hale Library, Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

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My summer working for the ARC of Sedgwick County...

The most valuable jobs are ones that not only teach transferrable professional skills such as working within a budget or scheduling meetings, but that also spark a passion that is carried with you for the rest of your life. The ARC of Sedgwick County is one of those rare jobs. I worked in the YESS program which stands for Youth Education and Socialization Skills. For a more comprehensive summary, it is a summer day camp for youth with special needs focusing on educational aspects in the morning and community integration in the afternoon. In addition to YESS, I also got to work with the Circle of Friends program which is a social inclusion initiative in schools throughout the Wichita community. Both of these programs are unique and provide important avenues for the special needs population in Wichita to not only gain life skills but also have a more fulfilling life. Throughout this summer, I have been fortunate enough to gain important professional skills as well as develop a deeper passion for serving those with special needs in a variety of ways.

Two major topics I gained insight to relate to money: working within a budget and fundraising. The ARC has a mission to provide invaluable opportunities for their clients in an affordable manner. Therefore, when planning weekly activities, there is a strict budget that guides YESS staff in their decisions. I have learned how to find and use community resources and build professional relationships with other organizations which are extremely important abilities for any career in the non-profit sector.

In addition to adequately using available money, fundraising is another area that I have seen at the ARC. One of the main fundraisers for the YESS program is Ha-Ha's for a Cause. The proceeds from the comedy show hosted at a local venue along with a silent auction raised several thousand dollars went directly to the YESS program. This is unique from the typical charity dinners or golf tournaments that frequent the non-profit scene not only because of the creativity but because of the involvement from the clients. Parents and other volunteers worked with ARC staff to put on this event because they believe whole-

heartedly in the cause of the YESS program. The ARC allows for guardians of special needs clients to be advocates and not just donate, but also gain ownership through assisting in the facilitation of the event. Watching how the ARC was able to incorporate their cause into the entertaining evening has spurred my creativity that can be carried into a future non-profit career.

Another major skill that I gained this summer was working as a team. All YESS staff is broken into five groups. I worked with nine other staff in the teen group, or youth ages 12-15. All staff participated in a large group meeting followed by small group meetings on a daily basis. During this designated time there is open communication about what to expect for the day, fill out necessary paperwork, create the schedule for the following weeks' activities, and coordinate any other details. We strategized together about how to best serve and communicate with our constituents. Working in a group has taught me how to communicate concerns with others in a professional manner and about building a positive and accepting work environment.

Finally, my main focus this summer has been learning about program development. Within the YESS program, as previously stated, we worked as a team to plan activities for our group throughout the entire summer. This has taught me that advanced planning is key when working with other organizations and coordinating transportation. Communication is also extremely important so that everyone involved is prepared for activities. I have written newsletters and spoken directly with guardians in order to communicate with our clients. Within the Circle of Friends program, I have learned how to utilize research to develop new ideas, how to market ideas to others, and how important creativity is when addressing a need. Being able to recognize a need in the community, primarily through research, and then developing a way to address that need in a unique manner requires an immense amount of knowledge on available resources and creativity. Developing the curriculum for an elementary age Circle of Friends program has allowed me to grow in all of these areas:

Overall this summer has taught me that the best profession is one that you are where you are passionate. Everyone at the ARC is passionate about serving the special needs population in the best way possible. I too want to be a part of this movement and I feel that this experience has helped to develop skills that I can make my goal a reality.

Circle of Friends...

is an innovative mentoring program matching special education students with regular education peers.

Everyone wants to belong. We look for acceptance in school, at work, and in the community. The Arc's Circle of Friends program helps nurture an accepting atmosphere for youth with special needs while fostering a place to build meaningful relationships.

Insert picture here

Caption describing picture.

For more information about starting a program contact:

Hillary Zwetzig at

- 316-943-1191 or
- HZwetzig@ar-sedgewickcounty.org

The Arc

The Arc of Sedgwick County
Phone: 316-943-1191
Fax: 316-943-3292
2919 W Second
Wichita KS 67203
arc@arc-sedgewickcounty.org

Circle of Friends



an innovative mentoring program by kids for kids

The Arc Sedgwick County



"Circle of Friends has been one of the most positive impacts on my life."

- Former Circle of Friends participant



How does it work?

- **Buddy System** Circle of Friends partners regular education students with special education peers.
- **Promote friendships** Circle of Friends hopes to promote true friendship through social interaction
- **Unique programs:** Teachers have freedom to develop unique activities to best fit the needs of their students. Circle of Friends provides support to teachers to build new programs and better existing ones.
- **Monthly Activities:** Circle of Friends also organizes monthly activities in the Wichita community such as going to the zoo, dances, and holiday celebrations. These community integration opportunities help to increase awareness and promote further understanding.

Insert picture here

Impact by the numbers

___# of elementary programs

___# of middle school programs

___# of high school programs

7 years of service to the community

Completing the Circle

Special Education Students benefit by

having more positive school experience. A more inclusive school community helps students feel accepted thus increasing self-esteem, communication skills and even attendance!

Regular Education Students benefit by

acquiring an ability to look beyond differences and identify skills, while developing attitudes of understanding and compassion that will impact their actions for a lifetime.

Schools are encouraged to create atmospheres of greater acceptance and tolerance. Less bullying and more inclusion are significant impacts made by Circle of Friends Clubs.

The Community has an opportunity for students with special needs to become more well-rounded with increased potential for employment and community participation. Regular education students will be more accepting of all differences within their adult life.

The Arc of Sedgwick County serves as a

catalyst by expanding awareness and understanding, while helping establish and support programs throughout the education system. Monthly activities promote social interaction and community integration.

A parent's story...

Every year, we look forward to the Circle of Friends program at McCollom Elementary. Our son Sam has severe autism – making friends with typical peers is something he isn't great at. Within the Circle of Friends program, social and learning opportunities are offered to engage Sam in a variety of community outings with typical peers. This program is unique – as it benefits not only children with special needs, but also the regular education population. We've literally built our "village" of support over the past few years ... Circle of Friends creates a culture of inclusion – typical kids learn volumes about tolerance compassion and acceptance. This program is precious to our education system... The gift of Circle of Friends benefits many and is a smart investment to ALL who are a part of it.

- Gretchen DiGiovanni

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Caption describing picture.

Introduction: Social Inclusion

Social inclusion has been developing in schools over the past few decades, particularly when it comes to students with special needs. For special education, social inclusion focuses on the acceptance of those with special needs into mainstream society and populations. This differs from the term mainstreaming, which advocates for educational inclusion in classrooms. Social inclusion attempts to foster relationships among all students, regardless of atypical or typical development.

Some speculate that early exposure to those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) will foster a better capacity for acceptance in the future (Laursen, Bukowski, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2007).

Elementary schools are uniquely equipped with opportunities for the social inclusion programs. Utilizing these experiences, such as recess, may provide students opportunities to include IDD populations in daily activities.

Learning social skills and acquiring friendships at an early age can help promote positive interactions in the future (Laursen, Bukowski, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2007). Friends can help prevent maladaptive behaviors such as bullying and provide a positive sense of self. Friendship can also help promote cognitive development and promote a sense of “other” awareness, where focus is not internalized on the individual but becomes focused on the group (Laursen, & Hartup, 2002).

Encouraging kindness to others is a cornerstone of elementary school lessons. Through social inclusion students may better understand differences in others, especially with individuals with special needs once they reach adulthood. Thus there is an increased chance for greater acceptance in society as a whole.

Circle of Friends:

Circle of Friends (COF) is one method for teachers and schools to provide an avenue for social inclusion of special needs students. There are several different models of COF programs. The model implemented by the ARC Sedgwick County, in which a variation will be used in this curriculum, varies from traditional models. Instead of using a circle of regular education students to support one individual with special needs based on class discussion and social skill lessons (Frederickson, Warren, & Turner 2005), the ARC of Sedgwick County utilizes a “buddy” system and provides arenas for social interaction to help foster friendships. Buddies are same age participants usually consisting of one regular education student and one special education student. This method has also been called a reverse inclusion method because instead of taking children with special needs into mainstream classrooms, regular education students come to the special education classroom (Schoger 2006).

Examples of these social opportunities include trips to the zoo, class craft projects, and playing at recess. Reasoning for this method includes the ability for more students being impacted and the ability for organic relationships to evolve rather than completely facilitated interactions. The goal of this program also differs from the other models. The other models focus on social changes in the special needs students (Barrett & Randall 2004), while the ARC program more generally attempts to establish friendships and foster a more accepting environment in society as a whole.

Concerns/Barriers to programs:

There are a few barriers/concerns for Circle of Friends programs. One of these is how to ensure the quality of interaction. In order for these programs to be successful, the programs must be fostered in an accepting environment (Calabrese, et al 2008). Next, funding for these programs is also a concern. Considering the current economic climate and the major cuts to education funding, these programs will have to run on extremely limited resources. Finally, there is also concern about the limitation on the

conclusions of research proving the success of these programs (Van Staaldhuizen, 2008). It is extremely difficult to qualitatively measure acceptance and other forms of social inclusion.

Benefits of Social Inclusion:

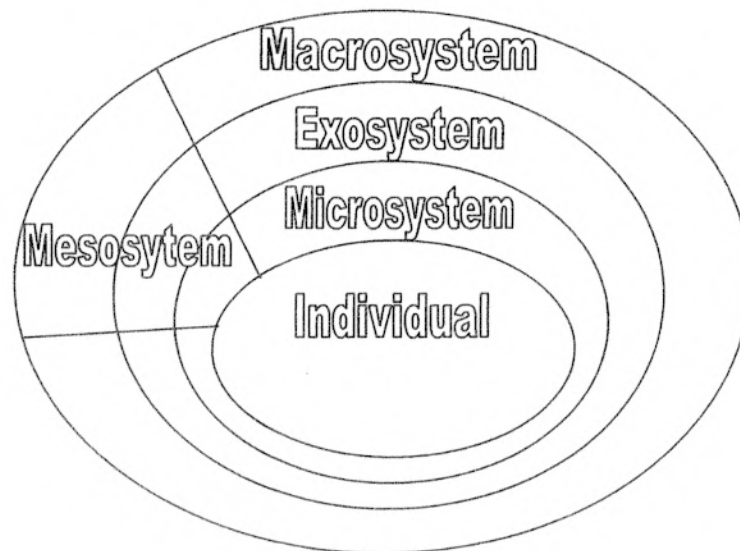
According to an article by R. Calabrese et. al. (2008), three benefits were identified as a result of the Circle of Friends program: parents of children with disabilities felt less isolated, participants felt transformed, and inclusive social conditions are created for children with special needs in school. The transformative aspect of Circle of Friends was expressed by regular education and special education students, sponsors, parents, as well as a more accepting attitude in the school environment. Parents of children with IDD describe the benefits of inclusion as, "...increases in social, academic, and developmental skills, availability of appropriate role models for behavior, and friendships with peers," (Haney & Cavallaro 1996). This article also states that circle of friends programs also helps schools achieve goals outlined by the No Child Left Behind Act and other required educational assessments.

Reverse inclusion has been shown to provide the following benefits for special needs students: increase communication skills, increased initiation of interaction, increased confidence, and helped these students identify their peers as friends (Schoger, 2006). Regular education students gained a high level of acceptance of the special needs students and created a more positive school environment.

The Circle of Friends Program with the ARC of Sedgwick County also conducted a survey in the spring of 2012 where 79% of participants stated that they enjoyed the COF activities and the quality of interaction with their buddy.

Theoretical Framework:

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory is useful in explaining the impact of Circle of Friends because it shows how each system can interact together. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory describes how individuals affect and are affected by their environments through a variety of levels: microsystem, exosystem, macrosystem, mesosystem, and chronosystem (Kellett & Lechtenberg, 2012). At the center of these levels is the individual. For this curriculum all of the systems will be a part of the school environment (See Figure 2). Furthermore, this framework extrapolates if an individual is affected, then there is a "ripple effect" to the outer systems. First of these would include the peer to peer relationships in the microsystem. Next, the exosystem would consist of a change in the individual classroom environment. Following would be the impact on the macrosystem, or the entire school atmosphere. The mesosystem is an interaction of several different systems. Examples of this in our adapted interpretation could include outside play dates where children interact with other families or different classrooms interacting in the school environment. The chronosystem would not be affected as it pertains to the timeframe in which this is occurring.



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Week One: Introduction to Circle of Friends

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.3.4, 1.4.1, 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3

Goal:

- Students will understand the concept friendship, special needs, and the Circle of Friends program.

Objective:

- Students will draw one picture of tolerance or acceptance.
- Each student will participate in the group discussions.

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

2) Introduce and tell a little about yourself.

3) Tolerance and acceptance discussion:

Materials: paper and markers

- Whole class discussion. Ask the following questions:
 - o Who knows what tolerance and acceptance mean?
 - Tolerance: willingness to recognize and respect others and their thoughts
 - Acceptance: favorable, positive, kind treatment of others
 - o Why is it important to be tolerant and accepting?
- Separate into groups: draw pictures of what tolerance and acceptance mean.

4) Special needs discussion:

- Ask if anyone knows what special needs are.
- Explain that some kids are born differently from others. They are just like everyone else, but sometimes they see the world differently. We want to include them by showing tolerance and acceptance, so this program is for you to have fun and learn how to accept others that may seem different than you. We want you to all to become a circle of friends!

5) Explain Circle of Friends Program.

- We will meet once a week throughout the school year and do fun activities. We expect you to help make friends with the other students and to be good role models for them. Anyone have a question?
- Ask if everyone is willing to participate: So are you all on board?!

6) Create rules for the program.

Materials: White board or large poster and marker(s)

- Ask students to help make rules for the program:
 - o Let's make some rules. Can you help us all make rules and expectations for our group?
 - Example: All students will have a positive attitude. All students will listen to others.

Week two: Team building/Get to know you games

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3

Goal:

- Students will gain valuable team building skills.

Objective:

- Students will participate in 3 team building activities.

Lesson Plan:

1) Name Game: Dance party

- All students get in a circle.
- Go around the circle as students take turns saying their name and doing a dance move.
- The other students repeat that student's name and mimic their dance move.
- Continue around the circle until all students have gone, then repeat ALL of the names and dance moves as a group.
- Challenge: ask if anyone can say everyone's name at the end of the activity.

2) Expectations:

- Based on the expectations discussed during week 1, create a list of guidelines for students. Attempt to display them somewhere as a visual reminder.
- Have a large group discussion where you read each rule/expectation that will provide the foundation for your group.

3) Introduce Hot Seat:

- Explain what a compliment is.
- Explain 2-3 students will be picked to be in the "hot seat" every week.
- Each student will come to the front and other students will raise their hand to give them a compliment.
- Each student should get around 5 compliments.

4) Introduce topic: Get to know each other!

Week two: Team building/Get to know you games

5) Team Building/ Get to know you activities

- I like People Who
 - Pick one student to be in the middle first.
 - All other students bring a chair and sit in a circle.
 - The student in the middle completes this statement: I like people who...
 - If the rest of the statement applies, then a student must run to a different chair.
 - Example: I like people who wear tennis shoes. Everyone who is wearing tennis shoes must run and sit in another chair.
 - The student in the middle is also trying to get to a chair.
 - Whoever is in the middle last (or does not get to a chair) is then in the middle for the next round.

*** If chairs are not mobile use some sort of other method to mark spots. Example: have students take off their shoes to mark their spot.

- Grouping
 - Ask people to get in groups as fast as they can according to the following categories.
 - Same color eyes, Color of shoes , Color of shoe laces, color of hair
- I'll be your guide
 - Set up obstacles such as chairs or tables around the room
 - Students form a line and put their hands on the shoulders of the student in front of them.
 - All students close their eyes except for the first person in line.
 - The first person leads everyone around, and the group has to communicate and work as a team to avoid obstacles.
 - Rotate Students if time.
 - Processing: Did the group work together? How did the group communicate? What does this say about our group's teamwork or communication skills? What did you learn from this activity?

6) Free Time Activity:

Materials: shaving cream

- Shaving cream on tables, encourage kids to write their names and play together in the shaving cream.

Week Three: Field Day

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.6.3, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.4.3

Goal:

- Students will learn collaborative skills while obtaining physical fitness.
- Students will use addition to calculate scores.

Objective:

- Students will participate in two out of four field day activities.
- Students will attempt to count from 1-20.

Lesson Plan:

1) Guess Who Game:

- Put all the student's names in a paper bag.
- Pull out one and start giving clues to the name.
 - o Example: "This person's name has seven letters in it," and "This person is wearing green today."
- Instruct students to raise their hands to guess who it is. Students can identify themselves, but if someone else figures it out first, that student wins.

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

3) Introduce topic, Field Day!

4) Field Day:

*** These activities can rotate between two-four different groups, depending on size of class and/or staff.

- Buried Treasure

Materials: marbles, sand pit/somewhere to bury them

- o Bury marbles in a sand pit and let students hunt for them.
- o Ask how many marbles each student uncovers within the 60 second time limit.

- BeanBag Walk.

Materials: bean bags

- o Separate students into groups (number/size of groups determined by the number of bean bags)
- o Students/first student in line of their group place a beanbag on their heads.
- o Have students count how many steps they can take without dropping the bean bag.

Week Three: Field Day

- Marble Toes.

Materials: marbles

- o Cover a small area with marbles. (Several areas can be set up so groups of students can do the activity at the same time.)
- o Ask students to take off their shoes and socks
- o Ask students to attempt to pick up marbles using only their toes.
- o Have students count how many marbles they pick up in 60 seconds.

- Shoe Kick

Materials: cones

- o Have students loosen one shoe so their toes still are in it.
- o From a marked starting line, students kick that shoe into the air.
- o Record the distance the shoe travels by having each student mark where their shoe lands with a cone

5) Free Time Activity:

- Duck, Duck, Goose or board games in the classroom

Week Four: Music Day

State Standards (for Kansas): Reading- R.2.1.3.5, Music- 1.3.1

Goal:

- Students will learn collaborative skills while learning to keep rhythm in a creative manner.
- Students will utilize reading skills to follow written directions.

Objective:

- Students will create at least one craft by following written directions.
- Students will keep rhythm to at least one song.

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments.

3) Introduce topic: Music!

3) Music Crafts

- Shaker:

Materials: empty water bottle for every student, 2-3 roles of masking tape, markers, popcorn or dried beans, direction sheets (p. 1A)

- o Give each child a water bottle, small handful popcorn/dried beans, a set of markers, and a direction sheet.
- o If students need guidance, provide oral instruction for students to put popcorn/dried beans in their water bottles and tighten the lids.
- o Help each child wrap water bottles from top to bottom with masking tape.
- o Students decorate wrapped bottles with markers.

- Kazoo:

Materials: paper towel tubes, pre-cut 4"x4" wax paper square, rubber bands, markers, direction sheets (every student should have one of these materials)

- o Give each child a paper towel tube, 4"x4" wax paper square, rubber band, set of markers and a direction sheet.
- o If students need guidance provide oral instruction for students to color the paper towel tube with markers.
- o Students use the rubber band to secure the wax paper over one end of the paper towel tube.
- o Hum into the open end of the kazoo

Week Four: Music Day

4) Keeping Rhythm Activity

Materials: music player, music

- Keep rhythm to songs with shakers, kazoos, or by dancing.
- Play 3-4 child appropriate songs with a strong beat.

5) Free Time

- Student Choice, encourage music related activities.

Week Five: Travel Day

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.1.1, 1.6.3, Reading-R.3.2.1.1

Goal:

- Students will learn about a variety of cultures and collaborative skills.
- Students will utilize reading skills to learn a story from another culture.

Objective:

- Students will utilize creativity and communication skills by performing a skit in front of the class with a small group.

Lesson Plan:

1) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

2) Introduce topic, Travel!

3) Travel Day:

- Whole group discussion:
 - o Engage students with the following questions:
 - What does travel mean?
 - Who has traveled the farthest?
 - Has anyone ridden an airplane?
 - Where did you go?
 - o Explain: Today we will be talking about three different countries: Mexico, Italy, and Australia (*visual aids will be helpful in this explanation, ie a map or picture of different countries*)
 - Mexico is south of the United States. Does anyone know anything about Mexico?
 - Italy is in Europe, close to the Mediterranean Sea. Does anyone know anything about Italy?
 - Australia is an island south of Asia, in the Indian Ocean. Does anyone know anything about Australia?

- Coloring Sheets:

Materials: coloring sheets (p 1B-3B), markers/crayons

- o Separate students into three small groups assigning one of the three countries to them.
- o Hand out markers/crayons and coloring sheets for Mexico, Italy, and Australia.
- o Instruct students to color their sheets as to best represent their groups' country.

Week Five: Travel Day

- Skit:

Materials: costumes/dress up clothes (if available) tape, paper, markers, cultural stories (p 4B-5B)

- Hand out a cultural story (about 4-5) to each group.
- Instructors help students assign roles and practice reading and acting their part of the story.
 - Students can write their characters name on paper with marker and then tape it to their shirt.
- Groups take turns performing their skit for the other groups.
- Give positive feedback to each group after they perform.

Free Time Activity:

- Board games

Week Six: Trail Mix

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication-1.3.3, Math 2.1.1.K1, Reading- R.3.2.1.1

Goal:

- Students will learn collaborative and social skills while following simple written directions.
- Students will utilize counting skills.

Objective:

- Students will count from 1-20 to mix the correct number of materials into a cup of trail mix.

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

3) Introduce this day's topic: Making friendship trail mix!

4) Mixing Trail Mix:

Materials: plastic cup, napkin, 10 Marshmallows, 1 cup of cereal, 20 peanuts, 20 chocolate chips, and 20 raisins per student, and direction sheet (p 1C)

- Instruct all students to go wash their hands.
- Have students sit with their buddies, if not already.
- Hand out trail mix materials and directions to each pair of buddies. For students to practice counting, give each group larger amounts of each ingredient. Ensure that there is enough for each student to have the
- Have each student follow the directions (encourage students to help each other) and make the trail mix with appropriate help from the instructor.

Free Time Activity:

- Student choice

Week Seven: Sports

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.3.1

Goal:

- Students will learn collaborative and social skills while utilizing motor skills.
- Students will practice verbally communicating their ideas.

Objective:

- Students will pay close attention to the motions of others by participating in the Aerobics activity.
- Students will give at least one comment in the small group discussions.
- Students will kick the ball in a particular direction at least once while participating in the soccer activity.

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

- Aerobics game:
 - o Instruct students to form a line.
 - o The first student in line starts walking around the room in a large circle, doing any movement he/she wants.
 - Example: waving arms in the air, or hopping on one foot.
 - o The other students follow behind him/her and mimicking his/her every move.
 - o After a few circles, the first student goes to the back of the line, and the second person in line can decide the moves for everyone else to mimic.

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

3) Introduce topic: Sports, specifically soccer.

- Sports Day discussion:
 - o Separate students in to three groups.
 - Students will share what their favorite sport is and why in their small groups.
 - o After about 2 min, small groups will start next activity.

Week Seven: Sports

- Shoot and Score activity:

Materials: Soccer balls, enough room to play the game.

- The object of the game is to practice kicking accurately between the legs of the middle player (the Goal.)
- Three students will stand next to each other with about 3-4 feet in between each other.
- The 2 outside players kick the ball softly and slowly through the legs of the middle player, who turns and faces the side with the ball.
- Middle players should stand with their legs straddled wide and hands up for protection in case the ball comes higher than their legs.
- Instruct the outside players to ask the middle player if they are ready before kicking the ball.
- Change middle players every minute or so.

Free Time Activity:

- Student choice

Week Eight: Friendship

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.1.1, 1.1.2

Goal:

- Students will learn collaborative and social skills.

Objective:

- Students will draw a picture depicting friendship.
- Students will participate and verbally communicate at least one comment.

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

3) Introduce topic: Friendship

4) Friendship Activities

- Friendship Quilt

Materials: one large piece of paper (large enough to staple all of the small pieces to it), pre-cut 5"x 5" squares of construction paper, markers/crayons, and stapler

- o Give each student a square piece of construction paper.
- o Instruct students to draw a picture representing friendship.
 - Examples include: activities they do with friends or places they go with friends.
- o Collect completed drawings and staple them to the large, colored piece of paper so as to create a friendship quilt.

- Group Spider:

Materials: Yarn

- o Ask students to sit in a circle.
- o Begin the web by holding the end of a yarn ball and tossing the ball to a student.
- o Before tossing the ball, call out who you pick to help spin the web.
- o When the student catches the ball, say one thing you like about him.
- o Continue until the yarn ends, consistently reminding students to hold the yarn tightly and continue to throw the ball.

Free Time Activity:

- Board games

Week Nine: Superheroes

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.4

Goal:

- Students will utilize critical thinking skills to create questions for a class visitor.
- Students will use communication skills to express their thoughts in both large and small group settings.

Objective:

- Students will say at least one comment in both the large group and small group activities.

****Pre-Lesson: contact local police officer/firefight to visit the class.**

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

3) Introduce topic: Superheroes

4) Superhero Activities:

- Have a large group discussion with the following questions:
 - o What/Who is a superhero?
 - o What do they look like?
 - o Who can be a superhero?
 - o What do superheroes do?
- Explain the following:
 - o Sometimes superheroes can be people who help around our communities, like firefighters and police officers. Today we will have a special guest come and talk to us about how he/she is a local hero.
- Critical thinking, questions for police officers:
 - o Explain your expectations for the special guest.
 - o Separate students into three groups.
 - o In the small groups discuss and write down questions to ask the local hero.
 - o Every group should come up with at least four questions.

Week Nine: Superheroes

5) Local hero visit:

- Local police officer/firefighter to visit the class and explain their job.

Free Time Activity:

Materials: paper and markers/crayons.

- Students draw pictures of their favorite super hero.

Week Ten: End of the Program Celebration

State Standards (for Kansas): Communication- 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3, 3.2.4,

Goal:

- Students will utilize social and communication skills.

Objective:

- Students will talk to at least one other student during the celebration..

Lesson Plan:

1) Welcome everyone

2) Hot Seat (refer to week two lesson for explanation):

- Name 2 kids and each one gets around 5 compliments

3) Introduce topic: End of the year party!

4) End of the program surveys:

- Hand out final acceptance survey to regular education students.
- Explain that you would like the students' feedback on the Circle of Friends program.
 - o What did they like?
 - o What did they not like?
 - o Collect this feedback for future programs

5) End of program celebration:

Materials: music player, music, candy, party games ie: pin the tail on the donkey, piñata, and certificates.

- Provide music, candy, and party games for students to celebrate their participation in the program
- Explain rules to any of the games and then allow students to have free time for the entire class time.

****If possible, give out awards to all students. (Use for the certificates)**

- o Examples: Kindest, most studious, best leadership, most helpful etc. Try to focus on positive character aspects.

